



Top photo: Chouteau Lock and Dam. Bottom, Newt Graham Lock and Dam.

AN OKAY ANCHOR

Waterway construction workers excavating the Verdigris River near Okay, Oklahoma, were surprised in November 1970 when a dragline fished out a two-ton "something."

Whatever it was, it was old, rusty, and big: easily 10 feet long and 6 feet wide. It had a central shank that flared out on the lower end into metal wings that made it look like — well, like an anchor.

The construction boss said if he didn't know better, he would speculate that it was an ancient anchor lost from some

sea-faring vessel. But this was the Verdigris, not the Mississippi.

It took Dr. William Settle, Jr., then chairman of the University of Tulsa history department and later author of the official Tulsa District Corps' history, to set the record straight.

Navigation had indeed been a part of the Verdigris River's past, Settle said. He speculated that the anchor dropped from a large barge or other vessel navigating the river more than 100 years earlier.¹²